

very highest authority in this curious genus, and his determination, even if it had not agreed with our own, would be conclusive.

And now we conclude our notice of this valuable addition to our botanical literature, merely adding that, if any of the plates can be selected as especially admirable, they are those of the *Equiseta*, which it seems to us that it would be impossible to surpass.

We need scarcely add that we strongly recommend the book to our readers.

*Catalogue of a Collection of American Birds belonging to PHILIP LUTLEY SCLATER, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S., Sec. Z.S., Editor of 'The Ibis.'* Illustrated by 20 Plates. 8vo, pp. 338. London: Trübner & Co. 1862.

Of late we have heard so much respecting the number of acres which model museums of natural history are said to require for their proper exhibition, that it may astonish some of our readers to learn that one of the most extensive collections in existence, illustrating the ornithology of the New World, is "arranged with the greatest ease in *ten* small cabinets measuring about 2 feet 1 inch by 1 foot 6 inches, and 3 feet in height." Such, however, is the case with that of Dr. Sclater, who has just published, under the title above quoted, an admirable list of his treasures, which will be found indispensable to those who are interested in that branch of study. This collection contains, we are told, about 4100 specimens, representing 2170 species, and is consequently among the largest ever brought together by any private person. The readers of these pages need not be told that the energetic proprietor of this comprehensive half-score of cabinets is one of the first ornithologists living; and the publication which we now briefly notice is well calculated to increase his reputation.

A work of this character, if reviewed at all, ought to be taken (as Napoleon defeated his antagonists) in detail; we therefore abstain from further comment, only observing that the synonymy of the species, and what is of no less importance, their geographical distribution, appears, as far as we are able to judge, to have been elaborated with great care. We will, however, take this opportunity of enforcing the growing conviction among naturalists, that the practical use of a zoological museum is commensurate with its adaptation for *real work*, and, consequently, that its true value, from that point of view, consists in its capability for being readily consulted. This condition is only to be obtained by a series of *unmounted* skins, such as that which forms the collection of the talented Secretary of the Zoological Society of London, and the abundant wealth of which this Catalogue is intended to reveal to the ornithological public.